

Guidelines for Locally Implemented Annual Evaluations for Grantees of the State of Michigan's Zero to Three Secondary Prevention Initiative

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All Zero to Three Secondary Prevention Initiative (0-3) Grantees are required to conduct an annual locally implemented evaluation¹. This evaluation should be in addition to the evaluation data required by the funding agencies and the Michigan Children's Trust Fund. Moreover, this evaluation should be both a quantitative and qualitative reflection of the grantee's impact on the local community, and the community and/or county's impact on the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

While the data that each grantee collects for the required state-level evaluation² of 0-3 is used by the initiative evaluator for legislative and other reporting requirements, these localized evaluations are for the purpose of informing grant monitors and administrators about the successes, challenges, and processes of grantees and their programs. Further, these local evaluations can be used in grant reviews, to holistically inform future grant applications, and to empower and support the larger state-level evaluation with in-depth localized information.

With this stated, the local evaluation does not have to be a daunting task. It does not require clinical trials utilizing "double-blind" comparison groups and other such scientific processes. Historically, some grantees have chosen to contract with an external evaluator but this is not required: a perfectly feasible, valid, and acceptable evaluation can be conducted without such assistance. This document is meant to act as a guide for those grantees unable to contract with an outside evaluator, and for those that do, to meet the requirements of 0-3 Grant Monitors. This document will not offer set parameters for page lengths or font size, nor will it layout requirements for the types of charts and graphs one should use in developing a report. Instead, this document, in its brevity, will offer suggestions for the types of information and data points that 0-3 Grant Monitors will look for when reviewing evaluation reports.

¹ Please refer to the Zero to Three Secondary Prevention Grant Agreement, Evaluation Section, Subsection A

² State-level evaluation requirements include: the Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory, Quarterly Data Collection Form Submissions, 31-B Forms for CPS Involvement, and the use of the Zero to Three Secondary Prevention Initiative Indicators.

Unlike traditional evaluation reports replete with statistical and technical jargon, the local annual evaluation should focus more on a reflective “self-evaluation”. The local evaluation should be a culmination of the program's year and include a discussion of program processes, data, and outcomes, which leads to a qualitative and reflexive evaluation on how this information will help improve the program.

Because the initiative collects a substantial amount of quantitative data, the focus of the local evaluation is not on what the data are saying. More important, the focus should be on how the program summarizes their own data, how the data highlight successes and challenges of the year, and what implications the data have for the program in the coming year.

At a minimum, local evaluation reports to 0-3 Grant Monitors should include the following four sections:

1. An introductory section that outlines the contents of the report, including a program description, data collection tools, data collection methods, and general findings/conclusions.
 - a. This is important as it offers space to highlight important information in the report.
 - b. One may consider this component similar to an “executive summary” but the reader should be able to understand the program by reading the introduction.
2. A section that highlights both success and challenges of the year evident through a review of program data³.
 - a. Use data descriptively and organize key information.
 - i. Quantitative analysis does not have to be difficult; simple frequencies and averages are often effective enough.
 - b. Discuss the data in the context of what it means for your program. Why are the data important?
 - i. Clarity, not complexity, makes for effective data analysis.
 - c. Discuss the success and challenges based on the data.
3. A section that focuses on other program information that is not apparent through the data.
 - a. What happened during the year that helped or hindered the delivery of the program?

³ Program data includes the required data collected for the state-level evaluation as well as other data and information collected locally, but not reported in other formats to the initiative. One important component is the results of the parent/client satisfaction survey. Because minimal information is required quarterly from the satisfaction survey, this is an opportunity to highlight other findings from the survey. The parent/client satisfaction survey is an effective tool to use as the foundation of the local evaluation. It certainly does not have to be limited to satisfaction and could be the only other data collected for this purpose.

4. The final component should focus on a summary of the data and other program information in the context of continuous improvement and program planning.
 - a. Ultimately, this is where the report will present how the information presented in the previous sections impacts the future of the program.
 - b. Specifically, it moves from what the data are saying to what the program is learning, expanding, and changing because of the data.
 - c. This section should, minimally, set the direction for program implementation in the following grant year, and inform the local program, grant monitors, and administrators of the direction of the program.

Technical Assistance with Local Program Evaluations:

Contact your grant monitor!

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